

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

Primary sources for this pamphlet: Southern Poverty Law Center (splcenter.org), Los Angeles Weekly 07.29.05, www.saveourstate.org, www.minutemanhq.com, Orange County Weekly, and azcentral.com

Border News and Action Updates at:

www.deletetheborder.org ♦ www.organiccollective.org
sandiego.indymedia.org

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a n i n s i d e l o o k a t
the



MINUTEMEN PROJECT

...the men
who make the
minute tick.

GENTE COLECTIVA DE LA PRENSA

Aren't you tired of watching our state become a third world cesspool?

(question posed on www.savetourstate.org)

Border issues and how you view them are a product of who you are—where you were born, your access to citizenship, your economic position and your personal values all impact the lens through which the border is viewed. For those with the privilege of citizenship or economic wealth, the border may represent protection and safety. To those who are less privileged, the border is more likely to represent oppression, hardship and even death. Therefore, the "crisis" at the border has many interpretations. In this pamphlet we attempt to reveal who the Minutemen are and how that shapes their definition of the border "crisis".

What kind of person can



label another person "illegal"?

The MM have realized that they must distance themselves from the 'out-of-the-closet' racists who have attempted to join their ranks at every turn. Most of their websites are now actively recruiting people of color (particularly Mexicans) and they refute the charge of racism on every occasion

(I have a black friend so I can't be a racist!). But if nazis can't wait to join them, what does that say about their politics and practices?



photo: neo-nazis "heil" at a Save our State Rally in Laguna Beach, 7.30.05

THE PATROLS:

On April 1, 2005 the Minuteman Project brought "hundreds" of armed and unarmed volunteers to watch the southern AZ border. Their goal was to locate border crossers and report them to the authorities. Accounts vary, but volunteers were responsible for detecting some crossers. Media from around the world covered the story, propelling the Minutemen founders and their group into the spotlight. Buoyed by the publicity, the MM vowed to take their patrols to all 50 states. Participation has dwindled and the spotlight is fading, but they have certainly succeeded in drawing attention to their "issues".



THIS IS NOTHING NEW. Not the first...

Vigilantes have been patrolling the border region for decades but increased their activities after Operation Gatekeeper fortified the San Ysidro crossing in 1994. Cazamigrantes (migrant hunters) such as Bob Maupin and the Barnett Brothers became infamous in the late 90's for their commando style patrols. Photographer Todd Bigelow published these pictures after patrolling with Maupin 70 miles east of San Diego around the turn of the millenium.



In 1977, David Duke and a handful of his Knights of the Ku Klux Klan got tremendous media attention when they inaugurated their 'Klan Border Watch.' Rumor has it there was also an anti-border group called the Minutemen in the late 1970s.



We're NOT anti-immigrant, we're anti **ILLEGAL** immigrant!



"A lot of these people coming in, they're diseased, they've got tuberculosis, leprosy. I mean, you don't even want to touch them unless you are wearing gloves. So why the hell should we pay our taxes to cure them? They are turning our country into a third world dumping ground. We're losing our language to them, losing our culture. They are taking over, and if we don't stop [them], our society will not survive. That's why I'm here."

Joe McCutchen, MM Civil Defense Corp, azcentral.com, 4.22.05



www.toddbigelowphotography.com

FROM DIRECT ACTION TO SYMBOLIC PROTEST

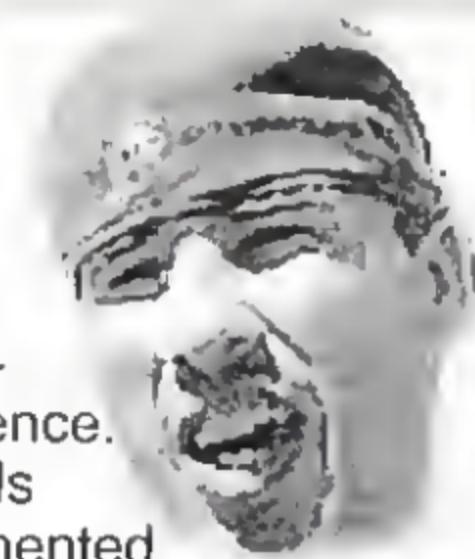
Bringing migrant hunting out of the closet required a new, fuzzier public image...the semi-automatics and attack dogs needed to be replaced by binoculars and flag waving retirees if "compassionate conservatives" and "centric democratics" were going to jump on the bandwagon. The plan was: 1) recruit thousands of volunteers from across America, 2) bring them to the desert, train them a little 3) get them to talk to the media about how scared they are of terrorists, drug smugglers and coyotes and 4) use the momentum to empower super-right politicians (like Tom Tancredo) to push a "secure border" agenda in Congress.

THE MINUTEMEN ARE VIGILANTE LITE!



* ★ ★ ★ joe turner

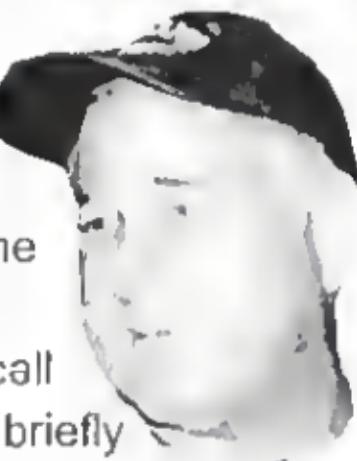
Joe Turner, founder of Save our State is a self described "aggressive activist". His racist views were shaped by a childhood of welfare dependency and transience. He believes his childhood neighborhoods were made worse by waves of undocumented immigrants. He delivered a speech in support of Proposition 187 at his mostly Latino high school. "We are not racists, bigots or xenophobes," he claims. "We are grassroots activists from every demographic who have come together to oppose the importation of dregs from the third world."



Border Patrol Auxillary / CA Minutemen

jim chase ★ ★ ★ ★

An ex-Marine, Chase was wounded on six separate occasions in Vietnam and, as he put it, "came home on [his] back." He found a job with the Postal Service, but retired in 1997 after suffering "what you call a post-traumatic stress breakdown" for which he was briefly hospitalized. "They tell me it's incurable and blah blah blah, but I function just fine in my opinion." Chase now buys and sells real estate, collects his pension and watches the border. He says he was part of the leadership in Arizona, but that he had to return early after he "fell off a cliff." Arguments over tactics--such as carrying machettes and bringing snipers--led him to found the Border Patrol Auxillary. His group began patrolling in July and they are currently seeking a permanent training facility in Campo, CA.



Why the Minutemen?

By appropriating a historical icon such as the Minuteman, Gilchrist and Simcox invoked the powerful mythology of a single hero, keeping watch over a fragile nation, protecting its innocent inhabitants from invasion. It was a savvy PR move. By doing so they made an enemy of the "illegal" immigrant in people's minds...not only painting migrants as dangerous perpetrators but exalting themselves as our heroic protectors.



The Men Behind the Minute chris simcox ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ jim gilchrist



January 2003, Simcox was arrested for bringing a gun onto National Park land while hunting for migrants. His supporters would like to view his arrest as a random incident but his behavior is anything but "normal." Three years prior, Simcox began exhibiting "bizarre behavior" when he began speaking loudly of a "Mexican conspiracy" to take over LA. His wife became alarmed and eventually divorced him when he started taking their 13-yr. old son to the shooting range to prepare him for an upcoming "race war." Eventually, he moved to AZ where he attempted to get a job with the Border Patrol. He was turned down for being too old, even after offering to take a desk job. Next, he became owner/editor of the Tombstone Tumbleweed but had to sell it when it was boycotted by the locals. As co-founder of the MM, he is under investigation for financial mishandling.



Jim Gilchrist is a retired accountant who lives in a gated Aliso Viejo subdivision with his wife and two elderly Chihuahuas. By his own account, Gilchrist was sent spiraling into a post-traumatic-stress meltdown by the September 11 attacks, and emerged with an all-consuming obsession about the dangers of illegal immigration that led him, in the fall of last year, to come up with the idea for the Minute-man Project. After coordinating efforts in Arizona last April, he returned to California to support the California Minutemen and launch his Congressional candidacy for the 48th district.

"Too many immigrants will divide our country. We are not going to have a civil war now, but we could." Boston Globe, 4.15.05